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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

**INFORMATION REPORT**

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Foreign Broadcast Listening

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1.

There are no regulations which forbid reception of foreign broadcasts. However there is a law forbidding spreading false rumors and anti-State sentiments, so that a person who listens and talks openly about what he has heard can be arrested under this law. Enforcement is not uniform.

2.

Curiosity plays the greatest part. This is a common disease of the Russian people, and the Soviet radio does not satisfy this curiosity. The official Soviet broadcasts are too monotonous, propagandistic and dull. The news given about foreign events and foreign people is too meagre, and after listening so much to sonatas dedicated to the Five Year Plan it is nice to hear foreign music.

3.

During World War II all private radios were requisitioned by the government, ostensibly for use by the Soviet Army, but they were stored in warehouses. The move was to eliminate listening to German propaganda. After the war some of the people had their radios returned. I am sure that will happen again in the event of another war.

4.

In the southern part of the USSR the locally produced sets are seen most often.

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However in the large cities all types of sets are seen. One very popular receiver is the Electrosignal, which costs about 900 rubles now and is made in the Voronezh factory. This is a German factory which was moved to the USSR after World War II. Other popular types were: the Salut, the Neva, and the Leningrad, all of which have short wave, and which sell for between 850 and 900 rubles now. In the provincial cities cheaper radios are more popular. These are radios like the Yakovlevich and the Record, which sell for about 150 rubles. They are made in Minsk and in Baku. The Ural-49 is a radio-phonograph combination which sells for about 900 rubles. It is made in Sverdlovsk. In rural areas, such as on kolkhozes, there are very few radios. Special battery radios such as the Rodina and the Kolkhoznik are made for rural areas. It is easiest to obtain radios in large cities and in the oblast capitals.

In rural areas only about 10% of the people would hear any foreign broadcasts. In moderately large cities no less than 50% listen, and in large cities up to 70% hear VOA and other Russian-language broadcasts.

Jamming varies in its effectiveness at different times of the day and on different frequencies. Usually the higher frequencies are the ones less effectively jammed. BBC was not jammed as heavily as VOA.

one could sometimes overcome jamming by slightly detuning a receiver either higher or lower in frequency.

Electrosignal receiver and a wired speaker. think that most people who own receivers have both. The wired speakers are not expensive. monthly fees to the INKASSO office, bills. Sometimes these fees are paid to the post office or to the radio office. The wired centers are connected with the Oblast Administration of the Ministry of Communications.

This is very complicated. It depends on the particular program and the timing. Often the VOA programs have the opposite effect from what is intended. The program content is not always appropriate for Soviets. The practice of telling about US prosperity is tactless unless related to our experiences. When Soviets listen to programs telling about US luxuries it seems that the person who is speaking is saying "see here we have everything, you have nothing; let me give you a quarter". I believe, for instance, that the programs should be timed to coincide with what is going on in the USSR, and related to that. As an example, when the Kremlin announces a price cut in consumer goods the program should be devoted to an analysis of what this means, and some contrast with the US could be introduced inoffensively. Another mistake, I believe, is the manner of broadcasts to the Ukraine. Russians as well as Ukrainians listen to these broadcasts, and neither the Ukrainians nor the Russians are pleased by the anti-Russian feeling. The Ukrainian people are not anti-Russian they are anti-Communist. I listened to both BBC and VOA music broadcasts, and liked the BBC news better, but the VOA music programs were more popular. The radio programs from Madrid and Rome into the USSR were easiest to listen to as they were not jammed so heavily, but the quality of these programs was very poor. The announcers used very poor Russian.

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